

Appl. No. 10/661,676
Amendment dated: May 3, 2005
Reply to OA of: February 4, 2005

REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 4 is dependent on claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant has made every effort to place the application in condition for early allowance by incorporating the limitations of allowable claim 4 into claim 1 thereby making claim 1 allowable. Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer as being redundant. All other claims are either directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 1 and therefore all claims in the application are allowable. Applicants most respectfully submit that all the claims now present in the application are in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. §112 and are clearly patentable over the references of record.

The rejection of claims 1, 3, 5 and 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Goldman et al. has been carefully considered but is most respectfully traversed in view of the amendment to claim 1 to place this claim in condition for allowance and expedite the prosecution of this application to an early allowance. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

The rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as unpatentable over Goldman et al. has been carefully considered but is most respectfully traversed in view of the amendment to claim 1 which places this claim in condition for allowance. If an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious. In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

It is believed that the amendment to claim 1 obviates this rejection since claim 9 depends from allowable claim 1 thereby making all the claims allowable. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 1, 7, 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Holmes et al. has been carefully considered but is most respectfully traversed in view of the above

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arguments and the allowability of all the claims. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

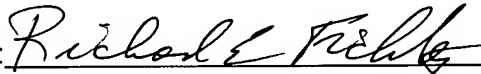
The rejection of claims 2 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Holmes et al. has been carefully considered but is most respectfully traversed in view of the above discussion and the allowance of the claims. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

The rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Holmes et al. has been carefully considered but in view of the amendments to the claims and the above discussion this rejection is most respectfully traversed. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above comments and further amendments to the claims, favorable reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims now present in the application are most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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